

# YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE POLICY

## ASSESSMENT – COURSE EXAMS AND QUALIFIERS

### **Evaluation of Students in Integrated Courses**

It has been a tradition at the Yale University School of Medicine that students do not receive grades in their pre-clerkship courses. However, there is a genuine attempt on the part of the faculty through small group and seminar interactions to recognize excellence and, conversely, to identify students in academic difficulty so that they can receive special help. The non-competitive atmosphere of the pre-clerkship period also works to encourage students to ask for help for themselves. This is evidenced by the number of students who freely identify themselves each year to their academic advisors and the associate dean for student affairs asking for help with time management, study skills and tutoring.

### *Coding System*

The registrar assigns a special, randomly selected code number (known only to the registrar, manager of the learning management system and student) to all students at the beginning of the first year. Students use this code number on course and clerkship evaluations and all required assessment exercises. Posting of assessment scores by the faculty is done using these confidential codes.

### *Responsibilities of Faculty*

Faculty construct comprehensive and challenging knowledge assessments as part of the *Integrated Courses*. Each integrated course has a required knowledge assessment (Qualifier exam) that is taken online at the end of the course. Students receive their final scores within 5 days of the closing of the exam. Students will also receive the rationale for correct and incorrect responses after any remediation is complete. In addition to the Qualifier, students are required to take one or two knowledge self-assessments (depending on course length) during the course to provide formative feedback on student progress in content mastery.

### *Responsibility of the Student*

Students must take all required exams (Qualifiers and mandatory self-assessments) on or by the time indicated in the course schedule. A student may request an extension from the course director if the student believes that events out of his or her control (sickness, family issues) have interfered with mastering the course objectives. If these events affect more than one course/exam, require significant absence from school, or cause distress for the student, the student must see the associate dean for student affairs. Exams may not be postponed for non-emergent reasons such as extra curricular activities or take a trip.

Students must successfully complete, and demonstrate proficiency in, every required course before going on to the next year. Proficiency is demonstrated by passing the Qualifying exam or successful remediation following failure to pass the Qualifying exam. Students failing a Qualifying exam must report to the course director within 7 days of the posting of exam scores to discuss the remediation process. The course director must notify the student about the details of the remediation process within 2 working days. The deadline for completion of the remediation should typically be 10 days.

Remediation is not a punitive process. At all times the emphasis is on supporting the student to allow the student to learn what is needed to be a successful physician.

### *Failure to Demonstrate Proficiency*

The course director reports the code number of a student to the registrar and the registrar makes the the academic advisor and the dean of student affairs aware if:

1. A student has failed the qualifying exam.
2. A student has not completed a qualifying exam or other mandatory assessment exercise, and has not made other arrangements with the course director.
3. A student has failed the qualifying exam and has not contacted the course director within 7 days of the scores being posted. (In this case, the course director will report the code number to the registrar twice—after the student fails and again after 7 days if the student has not contacted the course director to remediate.)
4. A student has failed remediation.
5. There has been a breach of professionalism (i.e., cheating, plagiarism) in taking or remediating the exam.

The academic advisor will meet with the student to discuss barriers that may be keeping the student from successfully passing the examination and what can be done to help the student.

In addition to the above, the Progress Committee (PC) is notified of qualifier failures in accordance with the ,”Progress Committee Policy for Inclusion of Adverse Actions in the MSPE”.

### *Tutorial System*

The Peer Study Tutor Program aims to support student success through peer tutors. Tutors strive to identify strategies to improve learning in order to increase knowledge and confidence around particular areas of study. Please [click here](#) for more information.